Handouts: OIC distributed the following materials prior to the meeting/conference call: (1) a nine element briefing and roll-out strategy from Bill Sonntag; and (2) an email containing input for the Data Steward's Manual from Fred Leif (Region IX). Discussion also focused on the Draft Annotated Outline for the Data Steward's Manual, distributed for the 3/23 meeting/conference call.

Participants: Marian Cody & Bill Sonntag, OEI/OIC; Rebecca Kemp & Rich Nawyn, R-IV; David Tetta & Robert Fallis, R-X; Fred Leif, R-IX; James Rothwell, OIG; Ken Blumberg, R-I; Mae Dooley, R-III; Dave Levy, OSWER; Steve Goranson, R-V; and Chuck Herrick, PERI-EA.

Background: Mr. Sonntag asked the group for comments and/or revisions to the minutes from the last (3/23) meeting. There were none. Sonntag briefed the group on OEI attempts to enlist State support and interest in the FRS process, including a letter from Mark Luttner which was well-received by States. Several States, including Maryland and Washington, have expressed interest in the FRS process; and a State briefing is planning for next Thursday (4/6).

Summary of Discussions: Bill Sonntag thanked the group for their participation in the meeting and conference call. There was no discussion of the Draft Outline for the Data Steward's Manual. Most discussion focused on the FRS Data Stewardship "Roll-Out" ideas distributed by Bill Sonntag.

Main points of the discussion include the following:

1. Need to Institutionalize Data Stewardship: Data stewardship has "emerged" as a function in support of initiatives such as FINDS, FLA, and One Stop, but it has not been formally recognized as an Agency function, especially in terms of position descriptions, budget lines, or other "official" mechanisms. Nor is it clear that many senior managers understand the role that data stewards play is supporting EPA data quality and accessibility. Participants agree that the briefing strategy should be designed to secure some type of "official" recognition for the role of data stewardship.

2. Data Stewardship Resources: The mandate to develop FRS will highlight the issue of resource allocation for data stewardship. Regional data stewards need FTEs and budgetary support. Mr. Sonntag offered that OEI will likely have funding to support Regional data stewardship, but that it was premature to discuss specific amounts or allocation strategies. It was suggested that OEI could review current data stewardship activities, and allocate funding to support those Regions with the greatest need. There was also discussion of whether OEI data stewardship funding would or could be allocated to State data stewardship activities. Mr. Sonntag responded that support for States may be possible next year, but probably not this year.

3. <u>Need for National Program Support</u>: Participants agreed that it is important to brief and elicit support from the Agency's National Program Managers. National Program Managers can help to assure program staff cooperation and responsiveness to Data Steward requests and queries; provide data "refreshment" on schedule; and provide overall support and coordination for FRS and other I-3 activities. It was suggested that National Program Managers could co-sign some type of "letter of support" for data stewardship. It was also suggested that support from the AA level would be helpful and perhaps necessary for aggressive and wide-spread implementation of FRS data steward activities.

Action Items: Mr. Sonntag asked participants to provide input or commentary on the outline for the Data Steward's Manual. OIC will incorporate comments and produce a full draft of the document for distribution before next week's meeting/conference call. OIC will also incorporate comments received today, and produce an elaborated version of the roll-out strategy. Lastly, the group will discuss resource needs for the data stewardship process.

Next Call: The next Data Stewards meeting and conference call is scheduled for Thursday, April 6th, from 2:30-4:00.